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Greater Monterey County Region

Goals and Objectives

In the IRWM Plan process, development of objectives is a key step, as objectives provide a basis for decision-making, guide work efforts, and can be used to evaluate project benefits. As a result, the Regional Water Management Group developed a series of guiding principles and goals, which ultimately led to the creation of objectives. The planning objectives are targeted outcomes that benefit the region. When implementing regional projects, project partners will strive to meet as many objectives as possible while also recognizing that some objectives may not be fully achieved. During the development of the guiding principles, goals, and objectives, the Regional Water Management Group considered the issues and concerns identified during this process.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Continue to provide localized solutions to regional water supply issues
- Do not burden anyone unfairly or unnecessarily
- Need to measure results of projects through monitoring
- Encourage projects with multiple benefits
- Support collaboration of agencies, organizations, stakeholders, and willing landowners on the development of projects that provide water resource benefits
- Minimize negative impacts to the environment and the local economy from water resource management projects
- Recognize, respect, and consider water rights and those who hold them
- Projects should be science based

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

WATER SUPPLY

Goals:

- Improve water supply reliability.
- Improve the long-term hydrologic balance between recharge and withdrawal.

Objectives:

- Protect and augment groundwater and surface water supplies for designated beneficial uses.
- Increase groundwater recharge and protect groundwater recharge areas.
- Provide sufficient water supply to meet all identified water needs through the year 2030.
- Optimize the use of groundwater storage with infrastructure enhancements and improved operational techniques.
- Address water storage and conveyance infrastructure needs.
- Diversify water supply sources, including but not limited to the use of recycled water.
- Maximize water conservation programs.
- Capture and manage storm water runoff.
- Optimize conjunctive use where appropriate.
- Support research and monitoring to better understand identified water supply needs.
- Support the creation of water supply certainties for local production of agricultural products.
- Promote public education about water supply issues and needs.

- Establish a plan to provide emergency drinking water to communities in the region in the event of a disaster.

WATER QUALITY

Goal:

- Protect and improve surface, groundwater, estuarine, and coastal water quality for all designated beneficial uses.

Objectives:

- Meet or exceed all applicable water quality regulatory standards (for drinking water, surface and groundwater quality).
- Prevent seawater intrusion.
- Incorporate or promote principles of low impact development where feasible, appropriate, and cost effective.
- Protect surface waters and groundwater basins from contamination and the threat of contamination.
- Support research and pilot projects for the co-management of food safety and water quality protection.
- Improve septic systems, sewer system infrastructure, wastewater treatment systems, and manure management programs to prevent water quality contamination.
- Support research and other efforts on salinity management.
- Support monitoring to better understand major sources of erosion, and implement a comprehensive erosion control program.
- Promote programs and projects to reduce the quantity and improve the quality of urban and agricultural runoff and/or mitigate their effects in surface waters, groundwater, and the marine environment.
- Promote regional monitoring and analysis to better understand water quality conditions.
- Support research of emerging technologies (enzymes, etc.) to develop effective water pollution prevention and mitigation measures.
- Promote public education about water quality issues and needs.
- Utilize emerging technologies to better track sources of pollution (i.e., PCR, GIS, etc.).

FLOOD PROTECTION AND FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT

Goal:

- Develop, fund, and implement integrated watershed approaches to flood management through collaborative and community supported processes.

Objectives:

- Protect infrastructure and property from flood damage.
- Improve flood management infrastructure and operational techniques/strategies.
- Implement flood management projects that provide multiple benefits such as public safety, habitat protection, recreation, agriculture, and economic development.
- Protect, restore, and enhance the natural ecological and hydrological functions of rivers, creeks, streams, and their floodplains.
- Support research and monitoring efforts to understand the effects of flooding on surface and coastal waters particularly following wildfire events.
- Support research and monitoring efforts to understand the effects of flooding on transport and persistence of pathogens in food crop production areas.

- Support management of flood waters so that they do not contaminate fresh produce in the field.
- Promote public education about local flood management issues and needs.

ENVIRONMENT

Goal:

- Protect, enhance, and restore the region's ecological resources while respecting the rights of private property owners.

Objectives:

- Support science-based projects to protect, improve, and restore the region's ecological resources.
- Develop and implement projects that protect, enhance, and/or restore the ecologic functions of rivers, streams, wetlands, estuaries and coastal lagoons, while providing opportunities for public access and recreation where appropriate.
- Protect and enhance state and federally listed species and their habitats.
- Minimize adverse environmental impacts of water resource management projects.
- Support research and monitoring to better understand environmental conditions, environmental water needs, and the impacts of water-related projects on environmental resources.
- Implement fish-friendly stream and river corridor restoration projects.
- Reduce adverse impacts of sedimentation into streams, particularly from roads and non-point sources.
- Reduce the effects of invasive species.
- Promote native drought-tolerant plantings in municipal and residential landscaping.
- Consider opportunities to purchase fee title or conservation easements on lands from willing sellers that provide integrated water resource management benefits. Ensure adequate funding and infrastructure to manage properties and/or monitor easements.
- Support the development of cost-effective strategies to reduce adverse impacts on ecological resources.

REGIONAL COMMUNICATION AND COOPERATION

Goal:

- Promote regional communication, cooperation, and education regarding water resource management.

Objectives:

- Facilitate dialogue and reduce inconsistencies in water management strategies/regulations between local, regional, state, and federal entities.
- Promote dialogue between federal and state regulators and small water system managers to facilitate water quality regulation compliance.
- Foster collaboration between regional entities to minimize and resolve potential conflicts and to obtain support for responsible water supply solutions and improved water quality.
- Build relationships with state and federal regulatory agencies and other water agencies to facilitate the permitting, planning, and implementation of water-related projects.
- Increase stakeholder input and public education about the need, complexity, and cost of strategies, programs, plans, and projects to improve water supply, water quality, flood management, coastal conservation, and environmental protection.

DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

Goal:

- Ensure the provision of high-quality, potable, affordable water and healthy conditions for disadvantaged communities.

Objectives:

- Seek funding opportunities to ensure all communities have a water system with adequate, safe, high-quality drinking water.
- Seek funding opportunities to ensure all communities have adequate wastewater treatment.
- Ensure that disadvantaged communities are adequately protected from flooding and the impacts of poor surface and groundwater quality.
- Provide support for the participation of disadvantaged communities in the development, implementation, monitoring, and long-term maintenance of water resource management projects.
- Promote public education in disadvantaged communities about water resource protection, pollution prevention, conservation, water quality, and watershed health.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Goal:

- Adapt the region's water management approach to deal with impacts of climate change using science-based approaches, and minimize the regional causal effects.

Objectives:

- Plan for potential impacts of future climate change.
- Support increased monitoring and research to obtain greater understanding of long-term impacts of climate change in the Greater Monterey County region.
- Support efforts to research alternative energy and to diversify energy sources appropriate for the region.
- Seek long-term solutions to reduce greenhouse gas producing energy use.
- Seek long-term solutions to maintain and protect existing pristine natural resources.
- Support research of land-based efforts such as carbon-sequestration on working lands and wildlands in the Greater Monterey County region.
- Promote public education about impacts of climate change, particularly as it relates to water resource management in the Greater Monterey County region.